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## THE CASE OF THE RAILWAYS.

It is a fact strange, yet perfectly true, that you may enter Scotland at Berwick, and be transported by a railway, in little more than an hour and a half, to Edinburgh; may then cross a couple of estuaries by splendid, well-appointed steamers, besides a tract of country by a second line of railway, and finally advance by a third railway to Aberdeen—thus traversing the most important parts of our northern country in the most easy and luxurious way, saving a considerable amount of time upon the old modes of travelling, and paying but a trifle compared with what was formerly necessary—all in a manner at the expense of a portion of the community; since the fact is so, that these railways and steamers either make no return whatever, or, at the best, the shadow of a return, to their shareholders. Such we believe to be the case in many other tracts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. It is also true, that the railways of the empire generally, while everywhere useful to the public, yield but an inadequate return to those who formed them. The entire outlay has been £286,000,000, and the annual revenue available for the proprietors is such (apart from what are called preference stocks) as to yield little over 3 per cent.

A fine business this for those engaged in it! But the case of the railway proprietors is not alone seen in their meagre or no dividends. The public demands of them an expedition which makes safety, to say the least, critical. Accidents take place, and the unfortunate company, which never perhaps touches a penny of profit, has to make up for all the damage to life and limb which has resulted, besides sustaining endless newspaper abuse for not having everything about them superhumanly infallible. It is altogether a strange affair. 'Use the Railways—Abuse the Companies,' seems to be the maxim on which the public acts. If it were a custom among us to seize a particular class of the community, saddle and bridle them, mount their backs, and compel them to carry us about without the provender usually given to other beasts of burden, and with occasional but liberal administration of stripes and scoldings for real or fancied shortcomings, it would be something like the case of the unfortunate holders of railway property in Britain.

But railway shareholders became so voluntarily, and their intention and hope was to realise large profits. Things have turned out badly for them, by reason of the heedless cupidity which animated them at starting, and which led to so much unprofitable expenditure. The accidents from which they suffer, and for which they are so much vilified, are in a great measure a

consequence of the parsimony which they practise in the management of trains. There is some truth here, but not enough for a justification.

In the first place, it cannot be necessary in this country to apologise for entering upon a speculation, honourable in itself, in the hope of profit. The individual merchant has avowedly no other object; yet, when his calculations are disappointed to his deep injury or ruin, people do not in general feel that mercantile views have deprived him of all title to sympathy. If so with the individual, why not so with the company? As to the frightful competition which caused so much unprofitable expenditure, it is evident to us that the blame lay with a deficiency in our public administration.

It having become evident that the country was to be pervaded by railways, the questions arose, by whom and how? The genius and habits of the people pointed to joint-stock companies, and to such was the business committed. Competition, the predominant idea of all industrial countries like ours, was also to be allowed free scope. The legislature had then to deal with a pell-mell of rival bodies, all eager to engross certain tracts of country, and careless what became of each other. The consequences can only be described as horrible and shameful—a discredit to free institutions in the eyes of all who have them not. Committees of the House of Commons, perhaps composed of men perfectly honourable, but not possessed of supernal wisdom, were called on to judge in the mêlée of stock-jobbers, engineers, contractors, landowners, all bent on proving black white, and white not to be itself. Sometimes the committee-men themselves were personally interested; in which case, of course, the chance of a righteous judgment was considerably lessened. Clever barristers made £20,000 and even £30,000 a year by specialties for the confusion of right and wrong. One is said to have in one year pocketed no less than £38,000. We walked into a committee-room one day, and learned it was the seventy-second day it had sat, the average expense to the proposed company for each day being £3000. The total expenditure for the act constituting this particular company approached half a million. The entire expenditure of British railways on the score of legislation had, in 1853, reached £14,000,000. Furnished with licences for self-destruction, companies established main-lines where cheap branches alone were wanted, and dear branches where there ought to have been no railways at all—all in a frenzied eagerness lest others should come in upon the ground. One consequence of the hot haste was, that the prices of land, and expenses for engineering and construction, were frightfully exaggerated.

It seems like a dream; but we have been assured, on excellent authority, that a Highland proprietor, who has a seat in the legislature, had arranged to receive L.30,000, merely to induce him to abstain from opposing a certain non-effected railway, over and above a good price for his land. Equally dream-like, but equally true is it, that L.1000 was paid as a not unreasonable fee to an engineer for taking a superficial survey of a district in which a railway was proposed. As an additional illustration of the exaggerated scale on which everything was done at that time, we are enabled to state, that a branch-railway was proposed over a limited district at an expense of about L.240,000; the same district which has since been served with a single line—amply sufficient for its needs—at L.80,000, on which, after all, but a moderate percentage is to be expected.

Now, it may look like a paradox, but it is quite true that these evils cannot reasonably be attributed to the companies, as companies. As well leave sweetmeats exposed to a pack of children, and blame them for falling upon them. As well blame the assembly in a theatre for rushing out on an alarm of fire, and getting themselves suffocated in the lobbies. The root of the offence lay in our want of a certain needful limit to the principle of competition—a want only now beginning to be perceived. When we praise this principle, we should observe that it is only useful and good where a plurality of adventurers is desirable. When a town requires a water-company or a gas-company, a plurality of adventurers only causes double outlay for pipes and other apparatus, where a single outlay was sufficient. Competition is excluded there, or ought to be, by the very conditions of the case. So with the railways required in a country. They ought to be laid down according to some general plan—only one trunk-line here, only certain branches there; no more iron to be expended or land to be used than is strictly necessary for the general convenience. Had Britain done her duty in the case, according to the behests of an enlightened political economy, there would have been none of that frightful struggle of contrarious interests, none of those extravagances of thoughtless haste, no needless expenditure of money. The real wants of the country would have been supplied at probably little more than a half of the money actually spent. There would have been reasonable profits for the outlay, and the trains would have been conducted with more liberal advantages to the public, and probably with greater safety. Such has been the case in France, where the government planned the railways according to the best conceptions it could form of what was wanted, and also in part formed them, leaving competition to bring forward the company which would complete and work them most advantageously for the public. We have not a frame of government which permits of such things being done with us: we are too fond of individual freedom to admit of such governmental action. Well, the appalling bungle which has attended the forming of our railways, is just one of the expenses we pay for the freedom we delight in. Others may be found everywhere by one who looks. For example, the state of our large towns, where parochial and proprietary difficulties, standing in the way of sanitary or other improvements, are insuperable; or the state of our rural districts in respect of protection to property—the rogues left everywhere to work their will, because the public have a greater dread for a police. If we are right in thus attributing the railway-bungle to our general system, it follows that the railway companies are victims, rather than delinquents; and the public may reasonably be called on to take a lenient view of their policy. What is done, is done; the lost money cannot be restored; uncalled for competing lines, being in existence, will go on working; impoverished companies

will try to squeeze a profit where they can; and thus railway management is not likely for a time to be what it might and ought to have been. It is a scrape the nation has got itself into through its preference of a certain system, and for the nation to suffer is no more than its due. To try to improve matters by railing at the more immediate and larger sufferers, the shareholders, or those scape-goats of all the other parties, the DIRECTORS, is simply absurd.

And here it is recalled to us, that all those troubles between directorates and shareholders, of which from time to time we hear so much, may be traced to the same system of unrestrained freedom in the formation of railways, which has resulted so unpleasantly for the public. In consequence of the ruinous struggle to which they were committed, directors have often acted amiss, even where they were animated by the best intentions. They have been called on to try to secure a dividend, where additional outlay for plant and the details of management was more pressingly necessary. The difficulties of the case have been immense; and, if there have been instances of selfish mismanagement, as in the imperfection of all human things there might well be, there have also been cases of remarkable sacrifice for the general interest. We could point to one board, of which the members have seriously compromised their personal fortunes for the purpose of obtaining the funds needed to carry on the business of the railway. It appears to us that there has been, in some instances, precisely the same unreasonableness on the part of shareholders to the directors, as from the public generally towards the companies—the less reasonable in this case, in as far as the shareholders have themselves been largely to blame in respect of that of which they complain. When John Smith, by common consent the managing head of his little concern, owing to his spirit of rivalry and fondness for speculation, shews a terribly small balance at the end of the year on the favourable side of profit and loss, his partners never think of calling John a swindler. What they do, if they are persons of common sense, is to look minutely into his proceedings the next year, and interfere when necessary. This railway proprietors never do. They grumble that their dividends are so small, but never think of looking for themselves into the management of the business. They leave everything to the directors; and never think of the possibility of there being anything wrong till alarmed by some imminent danger in which the whole concern is found to be involved.

While the public is suffering, there is much to sustain it under the affliction. Such is the natural buoyancy of all commercial interests in Britain, that even the worst railways may be expected to undergo a constant improvement in profitability, the natural consequence of which will be an improvement in the management, as a lucrative concern is always the pleasantest to have to deal with. Under increased dividends, things will go sweeter both between the companies and the directors, and between the public and the companies. There is, of course, little reason to expect a general reduction of fares, for we have reserved scarcely a vestige of control over that department. But this hardly presents an immediate subject of regret, seeing that fares are at this moment perhaps rather too low than too high. That they are everywhere below the old charges for travelling, is beyond dispute. Equally true it is that the railways transport goods at much lower rates than any of the former carriers. Coal, for instance, is carried by them at an average of a half-penny per ton per mile; while the old charge by the canals was three-halfpence for the mere water-road, with a charge for carriage besides. An addition of one shilling in the pound on the fares would make a large and sensible improvement in the profits of railways, and would be little felt by the public.

We would have the public, too, to be somewhat more mindful of the benefits they have already derived from railways; it would improve their patience under evils for the time unavoidable. With all their faults, follies, mistakes, sins of omission and commission, these iron roads, which take 20,000 tons of metal and 3,000,000 of trees *per annum* merely to keep them in repair, have immensely subserved the convenience, and promoted the wealth, of the people of this country. They save the public two-thirds of their time in transit, and two-thirds in fares and tolls; they have given us the penny-post, which could not have existed without them; they have intersected the country with telegraph-wires employing 3000 persons, stretching a distance of 86,000 miles, and flashing a million of messages in the year, many of them to and from places hundreds of miles apart; they have reduced the cost of many articles of general consumption, and rendered others common where nature had seemed to plant an interdiction against them. In 1854, it is calculated that 2,000,000 of livestock were brought to the metropolis, and that two-thirds of this enormous number came by railway and steamers. Independently of lessened expense of transit, cattle lose twenty pounds in weight for every hundred miles they are driven, and all this is saved in addition to the difference in the cost of transit. Besides livestock, railways bring to London in the course of the year upwards of 80,000,000 pounds of killed meat, much of which is distributed by the same means throughout neighbouring towns. More than half her supply of fish—230,000 tons in the year—is transported by rail; more than 1000 tons of green food every week, and milk by millions of quarts in the year—the itinerant dealers selling their 'railway milk' more than 25 per cent. under the usual price. In many important inland towns, fresh fish were unknown luxuries before the fiery locomotive came to their aid. Birmingham is a hundred miles distant from salt-water; yet fish may be bought there in the afternoon, taken fresh out of the sea the same day. The carriages of these railways, 150,000 in number, drawn by 5000 engines, travel every year an aggregate distance of 80,000,000 miles. In 1854, they transported 111,000,000 passengers, travelling an average distance of twelve miles each, and in such safety that in the first half of the year but one accident happened to every 7,195,341 passengers. In these journeys, each passenger gains an hour in time, amounting in all to 38,000 years of working-life at eight hours a day. Supposing the day's labour to be worth three shillings, these deplorable railways save the nation £2,000,000 a year in the item of time alone.

#### UP A COURT.

Two or three years ago, I established myself in one of the large manufacturing towns of Lancashire, with the intention of there commencing my career as an artist. I was young and little known; and though I had studied assiduously, and felt very confident in my own capabilities for the so-called higher walks of art, yet, as the public at that time showed no particular admiration of my productions, I found it convenient to abandon for a time my ambitious dreams, and apply myself to portrait-painting, in order to procure daily bread. I soon obtained a tolerable amount of miscellaneous patronage, and the constant succession of sitters of every grade made my occupation an amusing one.

I was about to cease from my labours one Saturday afternoon, when a low knock at the door attracted my attention. 'Come in!' I cried; and the door opening, a man entered, whose soiled moleskin dress, sprinkled with cotton flakes, bespoke him a factory 'hand.'

'Beg pardon for disturbin' yo', said my visitor; 'but aw coom to see if yo'd do a bit of a job for me?'

'What sort of a job?' I inquired.

'Why, it's a little lad o' mine as is ill, an' we thinken as we could like to hev his portrait ta'en wi' them coloured chalks, if yo'd be so good as do it. Yo'd ha' to coom to our house, 'cause he's bedfast; but we'd be quite willin' to pay summat moor than th' usual charge for th' extra trouble as yo'd hev.'

'Oh, I'll do it with pleasure,' said I. 'But when do you wish me to come?'

'Why, now, if yo' con,' said my new patron; 'for yo' seen we han but one place, an' it's not allus fit for a gentleman to go into; but of a Saturday-afternoon it's clyeaned up an' quite tidy; an' Willie'd be finely pleased to sit, if yo' could coom wi' me now.'

I assented at once, packed up what I required, and we sallied forth.

'You are employed in a mill, I suppose,' said I, as we walked on.

'Ay, aw'm a spinner at Wotton's. We stop'n sooner of a Saturday, an' so aw took th' opportunity o' coomin'.'

'And your little boy—what is the matter with him?'

'Why, aw'm fear'd he's in a consumption. He geet his back hurt when he wur a little un, an' he's never looked up sin'. Poor thing! he's worn away till he's nowt but skin an' bone, an' has a terrible cough, as well'y shakes him to pieces. But he's allus lively, though he cannot stir off his little bed; an' he's as merry as a cricket when he sees me coomin' whoam at neet, 'specially if he spies a new book stickin' out o' my jacket-pocket. He likes readin', an' aw buy him a book when aw've a spare shillin'. But he's Grime's Court; we mun turn up here, if yo' please'n.'

Turning out of the dingy street we had been traversing, we entered a gloomy little court, containing much dirt and many children; where the heat from the closely packed houses, combining with the natural warmth of the air, produced an atmosphere like that of a baker's oven. The contributions of the inhabitants, in the shape of rotten vegetables, ashes, and dirty water, formed a confused and odorous heap in the centre of the court; and, amongst these ancient relics, a wretched, misanthropic-looking hen was digging with the zeal of an antiquary.

'Why is this rubbish suffered to lie here?' said I: 'the scent from it must be both offensive and injurious. Are there no receptacles for these matters?—no sewers to receive this filthy water?'

'There's a sewer, but it's choked up; an' when we teem'n any watter down, it bryeks through into that cellar at th' corner, an' then th' owd mon as lives in it grumbles, 'cause it runs on to his shelf, an' mars his bit o' meyt. So we're like to teem it down th' middle o' the court, an' let it go where it will. As for th' ashes, an' 'tato pillin', an' sich like, we'n nowhere else to put 'em, for we cannot brun 'em.'

'Have you no yard behind your house?' I inquired.

'No; th' cottages as they build'n now are mostly set back to back, to save room an' bricks. There's but two places in 'em, one above, an' one below; so we're like to put th' victuals an' th' coals under th' stairs. It's terribly thrutchin' wark, they moight think as poor folk needed no breathin'-room.'

It seemed to have been cleaning-day at all the houses; the floors, visible through the open doors, were newly washed and sanded; and women in clean caps and aprons, with faces glowing from a recent scrubbing, were setting the tea-things with a pleasant clatter; whilst their husbands, most of them pale-faced operatives, lounged outside enjoying their Saturday-evening's leisure.

A pleasant-looking, neatly-dressed woman met us at the door of the house before which my conductor halted, and with a smile and a courtesy invited me to enter. The room, though small, and crowded with

furniture, was extremely clean, and as neatly arranged as the heterogeneous nature of its contents would permit. An old clock, with a dim, absent-looking face, ticked merrily in one corner, and on the chest of drawers opposite the door, were a number of books, a stag's horn, and a stuffed owl, which acquainted with one of his glass eyes, and stood on his legs with the air of a bird who was more than half-seas over.

'Is that Mr Worthington, father?' said a small weak voice.

'Ay, this is him, Willie,' said my companion, going towards the window, beside which I now perceived a small bed, and in it a little deformed boy. He was propped up with pillows, and held out his thin hand with a smile as I approached him. The pale face, over which the almost transparent skin seemed tightly drawn, the large, bright, eager eyes, and parched lips of the little patient, told too plainly the nature of his disease. His mother was still busy with his toilet, or, as she phrased it, 'smoddin' him up a bit'; so, taking a seat beside him, I arranged my paper and pencils, whilst the good woman brushed his hair and smoothed the collar of his night-dress.

'There, aw think he'll do now, John—willn't he?' said she, addressing her husband, who had watched her operations with great interest.

'Thou's made him look gradely weel,' answered John; 'an' so now, Mr Worthington, we'll leave Willie an' yo' to keep house, whilst my wife an' me goes to th' market.'

The worthy couple departed; and I commenced my sketch, feeling rather doubtful whether I could reproduce on paper the little, wan, half-infantine, half-aged face that looked up at me with a strange, quiet smile.

'Are you not weary sometimes, Willie, with lying here constantly?' I inquired.

'Sometimes,' he answered, 'but not often: there's always somethin' to look at, you see; either th' childer outside, or th' old hen, or th' donkey-man as sells blackin'. Once,' continued Willie, growing confidential, 'there was a real Punch an' Judy came into th' court, an' th' man as was with it saw me through th' window, an' asked mother if I was bedridden; an' when she told him I was, he brought Punch an' Judy close to th' window, an' let me watch 'em ever such a while; an' he said he'd come again sometime.'

'Have you some plants there, Willie?' said I, pointing to two black jugs, filled with soil, in which some small brown stumps were visible.

'Yes; they're rose-trees as mother set for me. She says they're dead; but there may be a little bit of 'em alive somewhere, an' so I water 'em every day still. An' see, father's made me a garden in th' window here,' added he, proudly exhibiting a large plate, covered with a piece of wet flannel, on which mustard-seed had been strewn. The seed, sprouting forth vigorously, had covered the surface of the plate with bright-green vegetation. 'Isn't it nice?' said he, looking up with sparkling eyes. 'Sometimes I put my eyes close to it, an' look through between the stalks, an' then I can almost fancy it's a great forest, an' every little stalk a big tree, an' me ramblin' about among 'em like Robinson Crusoe.'

'Have you read *Robinson Crusoe*, Willie?' I asked.

'Yes, many a time,' he answered. 'Look, I've these books too; and he drew a couple of volumes from beneath the pillow—*Bruce's Travels* and *Typee*. 'An' father's promised me a new book when he gets his wages raised.'

He had talked too eagerly, and was stopped by a dreadful fit of coughing, which left him panting and exhausted. He lay quiet, and listened delightedly, whilst I described to him what I had witnessed in the course of my own limited rambles; yet shewing, by his minute questions, that eager and painful longing

for a sight of the open country which the sick so often display. When, finally, I promised to bring him some flowers at my next visit, his joy knew no bounds.

We had become fast friends by the time the father and mother returned; and great was their delight when I exhibited my sketch, already more than half finished, and in which I had succeeded beyond my expectations. The child's artless talk, and the simple kindness of the parents, interested and pleased me, and I continued to work zealously at the portrait till the twilight, which fell in Grime's Court two hours earlier than anywhere else, compelled me to cease. Promising to return on the following Saturday to complete the work, I departed, after receiving a kiss from Willie, who held me by the collar, whilst he enjoined me to be punctual, and to mind and bring the flowers.

Saturday-afternoon arrived in due course, and having furnished myself with a bouquet as large as a besom, I betook myself early to Grime's Court. Willie was watching for me at the window, and clapped his hands for joy at sight of my floral prize. Whilst I resumed my task, he busied himself in examining, arranging, and rearranging his treasure, discovering new beauties every moment, and peeping into the flower-cups as if they were little fairy palaces, filled with untold wonders, as they doubtless were to him. The portrait was just finished when John came home, and he and his wife vied with each other in expressing admiration of my performance.

'Aw'm sure yo're neither paid nor hauf-paid wi' what yo' charge'n,' said he, as he placed the payment in my hand; 'but aw'll try to come out o' yer debt sometime, if aw live.'

'An' mony thanks to yo', sir,' said the mother, 'for th' pleasure as yo'n gin to th' child. There's nothin' pleases him like flowers, an' he so seldom gets ony.'

'Willie's full o' presents to-day,' said John: 'see thee, lad!' and he drew forth a new book, and placed it in the child's outstretched hands.

'Look, look, Mr Worthington!' cried Willie, his little face flushed with excitement and pleasure: 'a *Journey Round the World*, and full of pictures—only look!'

'Ay, aw thought that would please thee,' said his gratified father. 'Now thou can ramble round th' world boot stirring off thy bed. But stop a bit, Mr Worthington,' he added, as I was preparing to depart, 'aw've summat to fetch down stairs before yo' go'n: sit yo' down a minute; and John vanished up the stairs, whence he speedily returned with a small parcel in his hand. Unfolding the paper, he displayed a long, narrow box, formed out of a piece of curiously marked wood. On the lid, an owl's head, evidently copied from the squinting individual on the drawers, was carved with considerable skill.

'Is that your work, John?' exclaimed I, in some surprise.

'Ay,' said John, with a grin. 'Aw see'd as yo' carried yer pencils an' t'other things lapped up in a piece o' papper, an' aw thought a box would be a deal handier; so aw've made this at neets, when aw'd done my work, an' aw's feel very proud if yo'll accept on't.'

'That I will,' said I; 'and thank you heartily. But how is this, John?—why, you are quite an artist! Where did you learn to carve so well?'

'Aw took it up o' mysel' when aw wur a lad, an' aw carve bits o' things now and then for th' neighbour's childer; but yo' see aw cannot make th' patterns for 'em, so aw geet th' designer at our mill to draw me that owl's head fro' this on th' drawers, an' then aw cut it out. Willie can draw a bit: aw'll warrant he'll copy most o' them flowers as yo'n brought him, afore they wither'n: will t'ou not, Willie?'

The boy lay still, with his face turned towards the window, and did not answer.

'Willie! Willie!—why, surely he hasn't fall'n asleep

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already,' said his mother, approaching the bed. He had—into the long deep sleep, from which there is no earthly awaking. With the book clasped to his breast, the drooping flowers falling from his hands, the child had died, without a sigh or a struggle.

I stood long beside the bed, listening silently to the mother's wail and the father's smothered sobs, feeling it vain and useless to offer words of comfort till their wild grief had spent itself.

'Hush, Martha, woman!' said John at last, laying his hand on his wife's shoulder, and trying to command his shaking voice; 'hush! dunnot tak' on so. It's a comfort, after a', to see him die wi' smiles on his face,' than if he'd gone i' pain. He went when he wur at th' happiest, an' we'll hope he's happier still now.'

'John,' said the mother, looking up, 'let's not stir th' book an' th' flowers; it would be a sin to tak' 'em fra' him; let 'em be buried wi' him.'

Two days later, I helped to carry little Willie to a quiet church-yard, some distance from the town, where we laid him in a sunny corner, with the book and the withered flowers upon his breast.

### THE LAST OF THE ARCTIC VOYAGES.

SIR EDWARD BELCHER'S narrative of the last of the arctic voyages, undertaken in search of Sir John Franklin, possesses a real and important value, and ought not, therefore, to be shut up from the mass of the public in the two substantial and expensive volumes 'published under the authority of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.\*' Much of the work has little or no interest for the general reader; but there are various incidents connected with the expedition which may be properly detached and reproduced in a form adapted for popular perusal. Such particulars, or as many of them as can be compressed into a limited article, it is our present object to bring together for the benefit of the readers of this *Journal*.

It may be remembered, that in April 1852, Sir Edward started in command of a squadron of five vessels—the *Assistance*, the *Resolute*, the *North Star*, the *Pioneer*, and the *Intrepid*. The three first were sailing-vessels, and the other two were steamers acting as tenders to the *Resolute* and *Assistance*. They passed Cape Farewell, the southern point of Greenland, on the 1st of May, and proceeded northward up Baffin Bay, skirting the coast of Greenland up to the top of Melville Bay, and thence returning in a south-westerly direction to the entrance of Lancaster Sound. No traces so far had been discovered of Franklin's expedition. Through Lancaster Sound, they proceeded onward into Barrow Strait, and halted at Beechey Island, near the opening of Wellington Channel. Here the *Resolute*, under the command of Captain Kellett, parted company with Sir Edward and the *Assistance*, to proceed westward to Melville Island and the straits and seas adjacent. Sir Edward Belcher, with the *Assistance* and the *Pioneer*, turned northward up Wellington Channel, leaving the *North Star* at Beechey Island, as a stationary depot and general point of rendezvous for the rest of the expedition. Sir Edward and his companions were now in the arctic wilderness, forcing their way through frozen fields, sawing and blasting the ice as they proceeded, and experiencing the usual arctic perils and disasters. Among the phenomena noticed on the route was the 'red snow' mentioned by Sir John Ross; not a pale or dingy red, but deep crimson, lying in spots on the otherwise

unsullied surface. Sir Edward Belcher conceives that these tinted patches are caused by the birds which congregate in these regions, and feed on small fish of a brilliant scarlet colour. The vessels were not delayed in their progress, except at intervals, where the floe lay across the way, or at points at which previous expeditions had left records. Least any one should not understand what is meant by a 'floe,' it may be well to give the definition of it presented in these volumes. 'The floe is a homogeneous frozen mass, of possibly miles in extent, averaging from three feet to three feet six inches, or four feet, in thickness; it is tough, elastic, not easily upset, and impermeable to the sea.' On the other hand, what is called the 'pack'—frequently mentioned in these voyages—is 'a collection of bits of floe, or bay-ice, broken into pieces of every size, and in every imaginable idea of confusion, at one place two feet, at another twenty or thirty, and only cemented by casual freezing, tumbling asunder by its own inequality of weight, and rendering the heavier from the lighter by any slight access of temperature, or still more vigorously by cracking and letting the warmer sea flow in between the joinings.' The floe is for the most part safe for travelling with sledges, while the pack, both for sledges and shipping, is often extremely dangerous.

Sailing through the spaces which connect Wellington Channel with Queen's Channel, the *Assistance* and the *Pioneer* proceeded northward, till, at the head of the latter channel, they were impeded by a mass of ice many miles in extent, on the western side, which closed all chances of advance in that direction. Here, therefore, in a little harbour on the eastern side, the *Assistance* and her tender were moored for the winter season, not to move again until the spring of 1853. A few days after the ships were thus secured, Sir Edward commenced a sledge-journey over the ice, with twenty companions and three weeks' provisions. As it is with the incidents of the voyage, rather than with its objects, that we are to be here concerned, we will quote the account given of an adventure with the walrus, shortly after starting.

'I succeeded,' says Sir Edward, 'in shooting four walrus, two of which I was enabled to secure, but Dyak fashion—their heads only were at this time taken. During our absence on this journey, one of the beheaded carcasses floated near the ship on the floe-piece where I had left him, and was captured, but not, I believe, without further expenditure of ammunition: of this I have no particular evidence; he had no head to speak for himself, and no such trophy was produced. It is not pleasant to narrate acts which bear the impress of cruelty; and I must confess that, on reflection, the killing of four of these animals, without securing them for use, was unnecessary. The sportsman seldom thinks of this. The death of monkeys or parrots, and turtle, where they could not be consumed, has often brought me to the same reflection. But, without dwelling further on acts or motives, the duty of naturalist compels me to notice the conduct of these warm-blooded animals on being wounded. The father, mother, and cubs were of the party. On the death of the mother, or rather on receiving her wound in the neck, it was painfully interesting to notice the action of her young. One literally clasped her round the neck, and was apparently endeavouring to aid in stanching the blood with its mouth or flipper, when, at a sudden convulsive pang, she struck at her infant with her tusks, and repeating this several times with some severity, prevented its further repetition. The male, with a very white beard (strong horny bristles), came up repeatedly in a most threatening attitude, snorting aloud his vengeance; and well satisfied was I that the floe was my safeguard. Another, finding that she could no longer swim, deliberately hauled herself up on the floe to die.

\* *The Last of the Arctic Voyages; being a Narrative of the Expedition in H.M.S. Assistance, under the command of Captain Sir Edward Belcher, C.B., in search of Sir John Franklin, during the years 1852-3-4.* 2 vols. Published under the Authority of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. London: Reeve. 1853.

Now, with all due deference to anatomists, who may afford us full proofs of the capability of these animals to walk like flies on our ceilings, I must protest, from frequent observation, against the use of the flipper of the walrus for this purpose. It does not appear to be of greater aid than that of the seal is to that animal; and, strangely, its nails are placed on the upper side of the flipper, some inches within the margin. That the power of exerting the vacuum exists, I doubt not. But here, within a few feet, deliberately did I watch the progress of the animal in effecting its purpose. In the first place, the tail and fins, exerting their full power in the water, gave such an impetus, that it projected about one-third of the body of the animal on to the floe. It then dug its tusks with such terrific force into the ice that I feared for its brain, and, leech-like, hauled itself forward by the enormous muscular power of the neck, repeating the operation until it was secure. The force with which the tusks were struck into the ice appeared not only sufficient to break them, but the concussion was so heavy that I was surprised that any brain could bear it. Can any one, then, be surprised when they are informed that they "die hard," even when shot through the brain?

The mode of encampment on these arctic voyages not having been explained in any published works, Sir Edward thinks it proper to give a 'rough outline' of the tent, equipment, and other accessories therewith connected. 'The tent is very similar to that of American hunters, with this exception—instead of two forked poles, and one horizontal, resting in the forks, with the sides pegged down, the extremities of these are framed by two boarding-pikes, forming the pitch or sheers at each end, and a horsehair (clothes) line stretched over these forks, and well secured to the sledge at the back, and by a pickaxe in front, keep all steady—so long, at least, as they hold. Instead of pegging, the sides are well banked with snow, which retains the heat, and keeps them pretty secure, if well performed; and if not, the breeze is sure to penetrate and create more rattling than is conducive to comfort or pleasant dreams. Each person is furnished with a blanket-bag, formed of thick druggel or felt, having an outside shell of prepared brown holland, supposed to be impervious to the air. The officer, who should always occupy the post of honour, is located at the extreme end, and that end is always placed towards the wind, in order to prevent its blowing into the mouth of the tent; he is able, therefore, to feel exactly for himself, as well as those around him. Into this chrysalis-bag, by dint of a kind of caterpillar wriggle, each individual contracts himself, endeavouring, by every reasonable mode, to produce a suffocating heat, and using his knapsack, boots, sextant-case, or any other convenient object, for a pillow. Indeed, it is absolutely necessary to place any article, to be worn on getting up, sufficiently in contact with the body to preserve its flexibility, or to prevent it becoming frozen. Over the snow is spread an oil-skin canvas and buffalo-robe carpet; and when all are laid out, or have supped, a general coverlet of felt is superadded, which is supposed to confine the accumulation of animal warmth. Cold, it is imagined, does not ascend, nor heat descend; yet it is very distinctly felt in both ways, especially when the warmth produces something very similar to a thaw beneath. But the enemy—not the "sweet little cherub, &c.," but the barber\*—is ever aloft, condensing the breath, and dropping down refreshing snow-showers, which makes one very dubious about exposing his head outside his shell, the lap of which he manages to turn down, and complete the envelope. The cookery and other proceedings are mere common-

place. In these tents, you sleep as soundly as you can fancy under the temperature, unless the whispers of "bear," or the ominous snuffling of that animal, should induce you to ask: "Who is cook?" As this personage, although permitted to sleep at his post, is the sentinel *par excellence*, he, of course, has the place next the door, and, if not very sound asleep, is aroused, and betakes himself to reconnoitre.

In a subsequent part of the narrative, we are told that it is not easy to emerge from the above-described sleeping-bag, 'especially if the alarm of bear, fire, or water should be given, as the aggregate living mass is covered by another heavy blanket, made fast to the tent-poles at the officer's end of the tent, to keep him down until the rest escape.' Barring accidents, however, the tent routine is quite simple. 'At a certain hour, the cook is called: I never knew a cook call himself. Why should they sleep more than any other member, seeing that they have the same time allowed, and change daily? probably the last cook being the very foremost to call his successor to a sense of his duty. Our fires were candles, therefore soon lighted; but the cook had to procure his snow and thaw it before he obtained water. When this could be coaxed to boil, the chocolate was put in, and the word passed—"Cocoa ready." Heads emerged, pannikins produced (tin-pots holding, *just measure*, one pint and more each person), bisquit is served out, and breakfast soon despatched; no waiters to pay, no chambermaids. The luncheon, grog, is mixed with the water from remaining fire (now available), luncheon put into the "scrub-bag," and "Down house—break up!" Such, reader, is the delightful process of the polar travelling-gentleman, to be understood in future as "started" = after breakfast, &c.; "pitched" = or erected tents, cooked, and went to sleep.

On returning from the sledging exploration, which resulted in nothing, so far as regards the object of the search, the officers and crew of the *Assistance*, having little to do until the ice should break up, set about amusing themselves, as far as that was practicable, with theatricals. The first performance was injured by boisterous weather; but the company afterwards, on the shortest day, performed *Hamlet* and the *Scapegrace* with somewhat more success. 'The performance was, as far as we could hear, good; but some doubt as to the scenery—the preponderance of clouds at three feet above the stage, resulting from the condensation of the breath of the audience, rendering the busts of the actors barely visible, and thus, at all events, adding to their confidence, as no blush could be detected. . . . Sir Edward Parry mentions that the zeal of his manager produced representations even when the thermometer fell below zero. In the present instance, the temperature was -34 degrees outside, but the after-deck thermometer is registered as low as -37 degrees.\* It was, however, to my feelings, uncomfortably cold, even in her majesty's box. . . . Thus we passed the Rubicon of this much-talked-of polar winter in Northumberland Sound, the evening terminating at a supper given on board the *Pioneer*, where "bright eyes," as well as "brother polars," were not forgotten.'

After the shortest day, Christmas-day soon followed, when the officers and crews of both vessels appear to have made a jovial time of it. Sir Edward Belcher was drawn in a 'state-sledge' from the *Assistance* to the *Pioneer*, to inspect the preparations there making for the Christmas-dinner, and the fancy decorations amidst which it was to be consumed. The usual loyal toasts were drunk, and compliments exchanged; and then the worthy captain returned to preside over the opening festival of the crew of his own ship. Here, as in the companion-vessel, he tells us, he found all

\* 'The barber' is explained in another place as meaning 'the immediate condensation of the vapour arising from water at the point of condensation, and blown upon the beard—or the natural condensation on the beard of the exudation from "the animal."'

\* It will be understood that these signs mean respectively 34 and 37 degrees below freezing-point.

the luxuries of the season, not forgetting the national roast-beef and plum-puddings. 'The arrangements were all perfect, and in good taste; and our trusty crew were prepared to do justice to their fare, and enjoy themselves.' Leaving them, after seeing that everything was in progress as it should be, he adds: 'About six of the officers of both vessels, numbering seventeen, dined with me; and I think, by the very kind forethought of several warm-hearted fair friends, who will possibly remember their good deeds with satisfaction, that my table groaned under as good a spread of the luxuries usually exhibited at this season as it could have done in merry England—not omitting the roast-beef, plum-pudding, mince-pies, and frosted cake of our national predilections. "Poor Polars, how I pitied them!" Yet they seemed to enjoy themselves, and even to think of those poor people in England who might not enjoy themselves with half the genuine feeling. Our Queen and consort, our Duke of Cornwall, our relations and friends there, were not forgotten, not even the banner-cherubs and their mottoes; nor were our companions here, though for a time severed, yet possibly to be for a moment reunited in our spring travels, omitted. [Captain Kellett and his men in the *Resolute* are here referred to]. . . . Many uninterested persons may doubtless be of opinion that these are not matters for the public journal of the commander of such an expedition. I am willing to risk the verdict; it is the true index of the habits and customs of the arctic explorers in 1852-3-4-5-6, &c. Many an anxious eye may be turned to these particular pages, when others of dry matter, or of a controversial complexion, would studiously be avoided. We have but little sun at this season. Let us enjoy all the brightness that warm hearts and innocent amusements can afford, not forgetting those whose feelings are also gratified at learning that in all our enjoyments their presence alone was wanting to complete the cup. Sailors ever had, and will, so long as the good old breed is not extinct, have their feelings deep as the element they swim on, and no disguise.'

But these are but the occasional gaieties which help to relieve the tedium of a polar season: an arctic voyage is for the most part attended with many dangers, immense uncomfortableness, and manifold perplexities. On the reappearance of the sun, on the 18th of February, preparations began to be made for further sledge travelling. Excursions in various directions were undertaken, one of which was conducted by Sir Edward Belcher himself, and, but for his decisive presence of mind, might have been accompanied by fearful consequences. The accident sustained was owing to the defective nature of some of the articles supplied to the Admiralty for arctic service, as will be seen from the following extract:—"On this short excursion, we fortunately discovered the inadequacy of our cooking-lamps either for stearine or spirits of wine. Instead of brazing, they had been simply soldered, and the first time the spirit was used, the supply-tube fell off, the spirit (the entire day's allowance) was lost, and the tent endangered; and yet these things are put into the hands of the proverbially "careless and inexperienced seamen!" What mechanic could dream of burning stearine or alcohol in soldered vessels! Even the nozzles of the tea-kettles were so secured! Doubtless the government paid very handsomely for these inefficient clap-traps, but our blacksmith had enough to do to keep them in repair; indeed, we were lucky to obtain him, for the steam-department did not aid us in such matters, beyond helping the blacksmith in tin-work and at the bellows. These matters, at first sight, do not occur to the uninitiated, but they are pregnant with danger as well as inconvenience. Let us suppose that we had started with spirits only, as intended; but in this case we had

a small supply of stearine. First act: spirit-lamp defective, feeding-pipe falls off (soldered to the side and bottom, instead of top). The alcohol, flowing round and below, took fire, and destroyed the lamp for use. If I had not been present, and made a substitute, all the fuel would have been expended. But let us imagine that the tent did take fire, what would be the condition of the party? First, loss of shelter, and, from the attempt to extinguish the fire, inevitable frostbites; the result, loss of members bitten, or life! But there are other miseries; without fuel, neither water, tea, nor chocolate to drink could have been procured; and thirst at this season, particularly at the commencement, is intensely felt; but had such an accident occurred at the outward limit of a journey, the result is fearful to contemplate! What, then, I may ask, would be the chances in this region for our missing countrymen, if they escaped from their vessels? Fuel, even in savage-life, is requisite.' It may therefore have happened that Franklin and his men have perished through the Admiralty's accepting unfit articles from unprincipled contractors.

Here, again, is an incident, occurring somewhat later, which serves to illustrate the perils attendant on journeying over the ice. It was by a somewhat similar accident that Lieutenant Bellot lost his life. 'About eight a.m. on the 5th of May (1853), we moved forward, and on closing Star Buff, we found the ice becoming very tender. I thought that the off-shore ice would prove firmer: it was so; but I did not go sufficiently far; and in the attempt to make a short-cut, to avoid one of the most apparently dangerous spots, the leading sledge broke in. Here the trusty *Hamilton* [a boat taken with them to cross spaces of open water] did good service; she was soon floating beside the sledge, and safely were the goods transferred. The instruments were safe; and I was on the point, carrying the theodolite-legs in my hand, of seeking a secure spot, when I found myself suddenly immersed in a bath, by no means acceptable; it might have been an intentional interpretation of C. B., but it was beyond a joke. The current beneath the ice ran very strong. I had the chronometer on me, and, unless I was soon rescued, I should be missing under the ice! At present, the legs of the instrument across the hole sustained me just enough out of water to prevent wetting the chronometer. A track-belt thrown to me, and connected with others—for it was dangerous to approach me—soon dragged me out like a walrus, and all was right. The present condition and safety of our wardrobes being a matter of considerable doubt, Mr Grove most kindly clothed my lower extremities until matters were accommodated. Our only loss was ninety-six pounds of bread, and some pretty considerable dampness. The gutta-percha cases for bread proved too brittle, and split; they are certainly not adapted to the rough handling of seamen: no man who cannot understand (and feel for) them should be intrusted with, or can derive advantage from them; they will not stand rough usage. The bread thus damaged was buried, and a cairn erected to mark the spot, so that if distress required us to fall back upon it, we knew where it was deposited. But many of my readers would doubtless like to know how I relished this cold bath. I will describe it in a few words. The unexpected immersion was not pleasant: when in for it, I cared little about it, but the tide and safety of chronometer did not allow me to enjoy it. The cold was not felt, but a glowing sensation prevailed until I recovered my customary dry clothing.'

Here is a bit of natural history. 'We pushed on for Tongue Point, and there pitched. More bears! I was busy on the Point with the instrument, watching for an object, when I noticed a lady and her cub, amusing themselves, as I imagined, at a game of romps, but the old lady was evidently

more excited. Possibly no such opportunity has before been afforded by any naturalist of witnessing quietly the humours or habits of these animals. At first, the motions of the mother appeared to me as ridiculously absurd, or as if she was teaching her cub to perform a summerset, or something nearly approaching it: but the cub evinced no interest, no participation in the sport—indeed, moved off, and lay down, apparently to sleep. The antics, too, of the mother were too distant from the cub to prove instructive. I will endeavour to convey my impression of the exhibition, as viewed through the telescope, at a distance of a quarter of a mile, as well as the object on which she appeared intent. It must first be borne in mind that a bear of such dimensions as that before me would weigh about six and a half or seven hundred-weight. The object apparently in view was to break a hole in the ice. In order to effect this, the claws were first put into requisition, and as nimbly and gracefully as a dog did the huge creature tear up and scatter snow and ice to the winds. Having removed, as she imagined, sufficient, she then appeared to estimate her distance, calculate on her leap, and in the effort came down perpendicular on her fore-paws over the spot which she had scratched. Something, she imagined, had been effected. She continued to repeat this scratching and amusing mode of pounding until at length she appeared satisfied, when she assumed an attitude of "dead point," with fore-paw raised, and remained for some time immovable. The question occurred to me: "Is this a mode, by concussion and making a hole, of seducing a seal within gripe?" for I have repeatedly noticed that when we cut for tide-pole, fire-hole, &c., that these inquisitive animals will shew themselves. This however, I leave for others to verify. We now proceed to other business. Punch had rejoined: Mr Loney and one or two of the party, attended by the dogs, endeavoured to get within shot; but Punch, poor fellow, was done up, and could not be brought to the scratch. The cub evidently had sealed orders to open somewhere south-west; she bore up. Mamma steered away south-east, and parted company, apparently after the former bear, possibly her husband, and our party returned to pemmican and sleep. The experience we have had of bears' habits fully warrants the impression that they are afraid of man, dog, or wolf, singly—and would inevitably run from them, if escape was available; but cases may occur where, finding themselves suddenly and unexpectedly confronted, they are driven to desperation, and endeavour to shew fight. All animals at bay are dangerous. The polar bear is cunning and inquisitive, and, having discovered your power, very wisely declines the combat.

No traces of Franklin were found in Queen's Channel or its neighbourhood. Sir Edward Belcher is of opinion that he never even passed up Wellington Channel, but supposes his course from Beechey Island to have been probably in the direction of Prince Regent Inlet. This opinion, from the traces found of him subsequently by Dr Rae, would appear to have some foundation, though Sir Edward rather inclines to the belief that the ships were crushed by the ice in Lancaster Sound, as he had observed signs of some catastrophe at Cape Riley, which he thinks were left by one of the divisions of the distressed crews. The whole matter of the fate of the vessels, however, still remains uncertain. All that is known is what everybody may be supposed to have read in the newspapers—namely, that Dr Rae, in the journey which he made for completing the survey of the west coast of Boothia, met with some natives in Pelly Bay, from one of whom he learned that a party of white men had perished for want of food some distance to the westward of that region. The date assigned is the spring of 1850. Sir Edward does not seem satisfied with the account, but thinks there are

grounds for suspecting that the distressed party were tracked by the Esquimaux, and probably killed and plundered. The large list of articles found in their possession, which had evidently belonged to Franklin and his companions, suggests, to say the least of it, some very grave suspicions.

Returning, however, for a moment to the narrative, we may sum up in a few sentences the movements of Sir Edward on retracing his course from the head of Queen's Channel. It was late in July 1853 before the ships could get released, and in proceeding southward they were constantly obstructed by the ice. Notwithstanding, they succeeded in reaching open water early in September, and in the latter part of October gained a position about half-way down Wellington Channel, on the eastern side, where they were shortly frozen in. This second winter proved greatly more severe than the former one, and so obstructed was the channel with fields of floating-ice throughout the ensuing summer, that it became impossible to extricate the ships; and both were eventually obliged to be abandoned. Sir Edward and his crews escaped with boats and sledges across the floe to Beechey Island, where they embarked on board the *North Star*, which was there awaiting their arrival. It was now August 1854, and preparations were made for returning to England. Whether in that single vessel so many persons would have all arrived safely, may be doubted, for the *Resolute* had also been left behind, and the crew had been taken from the *Investigator*, belonging to a previous expedition; but it happened, fortunately, that, when on the point of starting, the *North Star* was met by two vessels, the *Talbot* and the *Phoenix*, which had been sent out in aid by the Admiralty that season. The crews were accordingly distributed; and at length, towards the end of September, the three vessels reached their destined ports in safety.

Sir Edward Belcher, as most of our readers are probably aware, was subsequently called to account by the Admiralty for abandoning his ships; but the investigation resulted in his honourable acquittal. It was acknowledged that he had done the best that was practicable in his circumstances. It is to be borne in mind that he was not sent out to explore the north-west passage, but simply to search for Sir John Franklin. When that search became hopeless, it was plainly his duty to return; and as he was thoroughly persuaded that the vessels left behind could not be rescued without unseasonably prolonging the stay of his crews in those dreary regions, and thereby risking their lives, he chose the humane and prudent part, and obviously deserves the thanks and commendation of his country. 'Is the sacrifice of life,' as he pertinently asks, 'to be weighed against the loss of timber, which, if returned to England, as all previous experience has shewn, is of no further value as a sailing-vessel, but simply to be sold "to break up?"' 'Finally,' he says, 'I do feel infinite gratification that it pleased God to afford me determination to perform my duty in the precise manner I did, under the circumstances and difficulties by which I found myself surrounded.'

The narrative, though necessarily dry in many particulars, is nevertheless more varied and interesting than the generality of arctic voyages, and, as the foregoing extracts testify, is often marked with liveliness and pleasantry. The writer, perhaps, never forgets that he is an arctic commander, and shews a corresponding degree of egotism and professional self-esteem; but this, in its way, rather piquant than otherwise, and does not detract from the general agreeableness of the work. The new information the work contains is very considerable; and it is beautifully illustrated with tinted lithographs, besides being furnished with a serviceable map. About half the second volume is occupied with an appendix, containing valuable papers on arctic fish, fossils, the remains of an ichthyosaurus,

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crustaceæ, and shells, all by writers of eminent scientific reputation. Taken altogether, it seems to us a well-presented record of adventure and observation, and, as such, may be expected to find a cordial acceptance wherever it may happen to obtain attention.

### THE HOWLING DERVISHES.

OSZ sees many disgusting exhibitions in the East, but not one that is more so than the ceremony performed by the Howling Dervishes. To be sure, it is your own fault if you do see it; they themselves—unlike the Turning Dervishes at Pera and elsewhere, who most willingly admit foreigners to their chapel—hate the presence of the 'unclean' like sin; and it is only through the interest of some great individual, and determined perseverance in making your applications, that you are admitted within the hallowed precincts of their convent.

Many and unsuccessful were our own attempts for a sight of the mystery, until we at last succeeded in procuring the gracious notice of the arch-priest at Broussa to our excellent recommendations by letter and personally from two gentlemen of influence, whose acquaintance we had made. To these insignia, we ventured to add our own earnest assurance that we would behave with all due reverence, and preserve a face of becoming length whilst present.

At the door, three youths who had been stationed there by the imam to wait upon us, and prevent the crowd from impeding our view, stooped to take off our slippers. This done, we were ushered upstairs to a small room beside the chapel, through whose latticed windows we were to gaze upon the mystery. The walls of the chapel present a ferocious sort of decoration, reminding one of the chambers of the Inquisition. Like the mosques, and other holy places, they are ornamented with written sentences from the Koran. But there is with these dervishes a difference which chills you—the suspended battle-axes, chains, skewers, pincers, spikes, which are used to torture themselves when the religious frenzy becomes too intolerable for the expression of the voice or of motion.

The youths who formed our escort placed us in the best possible position to view the scene, and, then arranging themselves on each side, kept back the throng. Many and bitter were the muffled imprecations upon the gjaours which arose from those beaten off as they tried hard to force within our charmed circle. Our small apartment filled fast, until, the heat becoming oppressive, our dragoman observed that, if air were not admitted, he was sure we could not stay. Upon this, the youths immediately stopped all further entrance of spectators, and opened a small lattice, through which passed a gentle breeze, imparting a delicious coolness to that part of the room where we were stationed.

A low monotonous chant rose to the lattice; we looked, and saw a train of dervishes slowly entering the chapel, headed by their high-priest. The dervishes prostrated themselves upon the earth, their foreheads in the dust; the priest, stretching forth his open palms to heaven, repeated a long low prayer. A tiger-skin was then spread before the Mihrab, and upon this the priest stationed himself. A rich green scarf was offered, with which he begirt himself with much ceremony. Then commenced a low horrifying wail, echoed by the whole fraternity, who sat rocking their bodies to and fro till their foreheads almost touched the floor.

By degrees, the frenzy increased; the eyes of the performers began to shine with a terribly unnatural lustre; foam gathered upon the lips, as in epilepsy; the countenance writhed in the most frightful distortions; a perspiration, so profuse that it rolled

down the cheeks in huge drops, rose upon the pale and sickly brow; the 'Al'lah-hou!' each moment was cried with a redoubled fury, until, with the violence of the shouts, the voice gave way, and the words became mere frantic roarings, as from a cavern of wild beasts.

Suddenly, a sound more distinct and more terrible than the rest arose from the heaving and surging mass. 'Lah il 'lah el il 'Al'lah!' cried a voice whose tones were like nothing earthly; and the others present caught up and echoed that fearful cry. The next moment, there was a demoniac shriek, and the man who had at first shouted, rolled over upon the floor in a deathlike convulsion. Those next him, with another frightful 'Al'lah-hou,' turned to his relief. They stretched him up—they chafed his hands—they rubbed and tried to bend his limbs; but he lay inanimate and rigid as a corpse.

With lightning rapidity, the infection of this paroxysm spread; the 'Lah il 'lah el il 'Al'lahs' became more terrible still: the devotees tossed their arms in the air, with the fury of maniacs. An instant more, and another dervish leaped from the floor, as if shot through the heart, and fell in convulsions.

This brought the frenzy to a climax. The imam encouraged the delirium by voice, by howls, by gesture. A young man detached himself from the group. The high-priest took an instrument that looked much like a pair of tongs, with which he pinched his cheeks with all his might; but the dervish made no sign of pain. A little child, a sweet little girl, of about seven years of age, entered the chapel, and calmly laid herself down upon the crimson rug. Assisted by two attendants, who from the first had stationed themselves one on each side of the Mihrab, the priest stepped upon her tender little frame, and stood there some moments; she must have suffered much, but when he dismounted, she rose and walked away with an air of extreme satisfaction.

Now commenced another and equally painful portion of the service. The imam regulated the time of the chant, by ever and anon clapping his hands to increase its speed, or commanding by gestures that it must be slower. Wail succeeded to wail, howl to howl, Al'lah-hou to Al'lah-hou, till at last the strongest men, unable to bear the violence of the exertion, fell to the ground in convulsions, or sobbed with anguish like infants. On the whole, a more revolting scene than the howling dervishes could not be readily conceived; and dreadful is the distortion of that spirit which can deem such torments are acceptable in the eyes of God.

A few days afterwards, it was my fortune to make a more intimate acquaintance with one of these dervishes; it was in this wise:—The Osmanlis have two diseases which are peculiar to themselves; the one they have named *gellinjik*, the other *yellanjik*. Under the head of *gellinjik*, they describe almost any possible illness of the body. The *yellanjik* is the more simple and more easily cured disease of the two: it signifies only toothache and its concomitant pains in the face. So difficult is the *gellinjik* to cure, that the happy ability has long been vested in a single family, through whom the power passes with each generation; but the *yellanjik* can be cured by those emirs or dervishes who are descended from Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed.

The charm consists in this. It is the fair sex who are usually afflicted with face-ache in Turkey; and, at anyrate, these quacks have a particular love for those who are called the 'weaker vessels' of humanity. The lady is affected with nervous pains in the cheek. Faith is imperative, and there is one particular emir upon whom her choice falls. He is sent for; his feet are folded beneath him upon the divan, and his green turban readjusted. The veiled beauty is led by a slave into his august presence, and seated upon a low cushion before him. The emir utters a short prayer, lays his

thumb upon the nose, breathes softly upon the forehead, gently rubs the cheek, and the treatment is complete.

A young slave belonging to the house where for a while we were invited to sojourn, was afflicted with yellanjik. Immediately, on her desire being made known, a messenger was despatched for an emir whom she named, and who was rather eminent in the cures he effected. The family, except one aged relative upon whom this slave attended, were staying at their country residence. Fitnet Hanaum was led into the presence of the emir. He might once have been a handsome man, but now his countenance had taken that sickly and distorted expression which often follows their dreadful ceremonies; and with his thick, bristling moustache and his long matted beard, it gave him by no means a prepossessing appearance.

I was that morning amusing myself with an electrical apparatus; and after he had operated upon Fitnet, he passed me as I stood in the piazza making experiments, which piazza was his nearest way to the garden from her room. He surveyed the jars for a few moments with intense curiosity, and then departing to a short distance, slowly drew forth a small brass ladle, and murmured: 'Buckshish! Buckshish!'

'Buckshish! Buckshish for what?' I asked.

He made a gesture, intimating that to give alms to his order was the usual thing.

'No; I cannot think of giving you buckshish. You are young and strong; you can work at your trade.'

'I do work—hard work.'

'For whom?'

'Al'lâh.'

'But your work is profitless to both Him and yourself. I shall not encourage it. It is spoken!' pursued I with the usual Osmanli expression of decision.

I was in the midst of an interesting experiment, and I turned to my apparatus. The dervish quietly seated himself upon the ground, doubled up his feet beneath him, still presented his brass dish, and there he sat motionless as an image carved in marble. Thus things went on for the next half-hour. But I was determined not to be wearied into giving him buckshish, and his imperturbable staring had become unpleasant.

'Just bid him go about his business,' said I to the dragoman.

He did so; but the dervish intimated that he should not retire without the money.

'If you do not go voluntarily, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of compelling you,' said I.

The dervish merely gave a complacent chuckle, which said that he defied me to get rid of him.

'Very good,' replied I. 'Now mind, if I do what you will not like, it is not my fault.'

I had a large coil-machine on the table before me, which, as those acquainted with such apparatus know, tortures the nerves beyond the power of the strongest man to endure voluntarily more than a few seconds. I laid hold of his dish with the conductor, and, by way of a sample, gave him a moderate dose from a smaller battery. He laughed derisively, saying: 'Al'lâh el il l'Al'lâh!'

'Then here goes!' pursued I, putting the magnet into the coil, whilst the attendants crowded round to see the effect. It was instantaneous. He rolled over upon the ground with a yell-like 'Al'lâh-hou!' The arms quivered in their sockets; the dish, which now he would fain have let go if he could, flashed about in his convulsed hands like a rocket; the countenance was distorted with pain and rage. In a few moments, feeling satisfied that he had had enough, I released him from the coil. He rose, and, nearly upsetting the dragoman in his flight, leaped down the steps into the garden. There, being at what he considered a safe distance, he turned, and a more liberal allowance of curses never fell to the lot of any man than those which he bestowed on me. He prayed, his face livid

with passion, to Al'lâh that I and my stock might be withered up, root and branch; that I might be, ere twenty-four hours had elapsed, smitten and covered with boils and ulcers! Now he turned his attentions to the women in my family. These he cursed from my great-grandmother to my great-granddaughter; and, finally, he wound up with a fervent prayer that my wife might prove anything but faithful or fruitful; or that, if the latter petition failed, my issue might be to me the bitterest curse that ever fell to the lot of a father. Since then I have often had a hearty smile at the discomfiture of the yellanjik doctor.

## A TALE OF ANDORRA.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART II.

On the evening of the third day after he left Perpignan, Carlos and Mina slowly traversed the Isabella Place of Puigcerda, and stopped beneath the balcony of one of the best houses in it: but not without recognition, for on that balcony had been seated a young and an old woman, the former of whom, in spite of the efforts of the other to restrain her, had sprung to her feet the moment the muletier entered the square, and had continued joyfully waving towards him a rich scarf she wore. She was a beautiful young creature, cast more in the Andalusian than in the Catalan mould—her mother had been a native of Sevilla—and the somewhat fantastic costume of the country rather enhanced than diminished her charms. The outlines of a red skirt and of a black velvet bodice, tightly fitting her figure, shewed the perfect symmetry of her form; the *mocado* or *serge manto*, which covered her head, served as a foil to a pair of most bewitching eyes and a complexion of dazzling clearness; while among the jet-black tresses that flowed over her shoulders, sparkled emeralds and amethysts of such size that they would have distorted the delicate ears to which they were pendants, had not their weight been chiefly borne by silken threads concealed beneath the cap. Vanishing from the balcony when Mina was within a few paces of the house, she appeared at the door before Carlos had well alighted, and welcomed him with every demonstration of joy.

'Welcome, Carlos—welcome,' said she, as she led him into the house, not, however, before she had saluted Mina too, by patting the sleek neck of the animal—a condescension which that sagacious quadruped met by a pert toss of the head, which plainly meant—'No humbug: it is little, comparatively speaking, that you care for me;' to which was added a champing sound, which evidently hinted that a measure of oats would have been much more to the purpose.

'Welcome, my dear friend,' repeated the girl. 'Supper is ready—I prepared it myself. You must be tired and hungry.'

'I have succeeded,' said Carlos, as he took his place opposite to her at table.

'Now the Queen of Heaven be praised! But I knew you would. Then all goes well?'

'Corriente—all's right—certainly,' was the reply.

But though the muletier spoke thus, something still seemed to oppress him; his brow was gloomy, and he spoke but little during the repast. When it was over, he gave an account, though not a full one, of his visit to old Levi, and when that was concluded, he rose and said: 'But I must go. The early morning must find me on my way once more to Andorra.'

'Why so, Carlos?' asked Juana. 'Why so?' she repeated, in a tone that expressed partly surprise and partly anxiety. 'Is not all now arranged?'

'Quien sabe?—Who knows?' replied Carlos in the favourite but evasive phrase of the Spaniard. 'No *compro nada de gangas*—I count nothing a bargain. We must be sure.'

'Then you will see Sagrita again?' cried Juana hastily, and in a voice that spoke evident apprehension. 'Oh, do not go. Stay with me. I am fearful of some mischance. Some friend of yours will go.'

'It is to avoid the possibility of a mischance that I go—that I go myself,' returned Carlos, a deep shade passing over his countenance. 'I must make sure.'

The sun was gilding the highest mountain-tops next morning when once more Carlos left Puigcerda behind him. This time, however, he was on foot, and his dress was different from that he had worn on his two former journeys. Instead of the broad *sombrero* and the full cloak, he now showed the peculiar garb of his province: trousers of a dark colour, coming up high on his breast; a short embroidered jacket, with a light *capa* or *gambote* over it; the *gorro* or red Phrygian bonnet, with the peak rolled up and gathered forward over his head.

'Little thinks my poor Juana of what I am about to do because it must be done. Yet she seemed uneasy—said she had forebodings—promised to pass the day in prayer for me on her knees before the shrine of Our Lady of Urgel. Yet it is for her sake. Honour requires it. Let us smoke.' Almost mechanically, for he continued his musings, Carlos rolled himself a cigarette with national skill, and lighted it with his flint and steel.

'Have I made everything safe, after all?' he asked himself. 'Surely that old man at Perpignan may be trusted. And as to that Frenchman of Foix—I promised to see him again in a week, and this is now the seventh day. I did not calculate on having to go to Perpignan. But he will surely give me a short grace. One day, or at most two, will decide the people at Andorra, and he is not likely to come there himself. Oh, Sagrita, Sagrita! what a curse you have been to more than one, Guyonemé Sagrita! But the avenger is at hand, though as yet thou little thinkest how the vengeance will come! Ah, my Juana, as little thinkest thou!'

Leaving Carlos to pursue his way with a heart full alternately of love for the one, and of loathing for the other of the two persons who now alone occupied his thoughts, we now cast a retrospective glance at the circumstances antecedent to the opening of our story, and forming the necessary clue to it.

It was the annual festival of Puigcerda, a famous festival; not a pleasure-hunter for leagues round, who could possibly be present, had failed to attend. The little town had attracted within its walls, still black with the fire of civil war, and scarred by Carlist shot, all that was gay in that district of Catalonia, in Andorra and the Cerdagne. Since early morning, the Isabella Place, and the extensive meadow that stretches along by the canal, had been crowded with the holiday folk. With untiring elasticity, stout lads and handsome girls kept up, round numerous and indefatigable orchestras, their respective local or national dances, such as the Catalan *pauens de baill*, the classic *contrapas*, or the vigorous *salt*, the mountaineer-jig or *bourré*, or the dizzy *balza*, as the waltz is there called; while the matrons and the elders of the people, seated by long tables, under the shade of fir-branches plaited into rustic bowers, watched and criticised the performers, or passed from hand to hand the *porron*, or flat but long-necked earthenware bottle, from which, holding it up at arms-length, they would pour a small cascade of wine down their throats, without any slip between its mouth and their lip. Traders-errant were invoking purchasers for their ribbons, sweetmeats, and jewels; jugglers were juggling, and quack-doctors vaunting their medicaments; gipsies—but to be short, it was a high holiday, and a Catalan one.

One of the dances had just been brought to an end, and the musicians, who with flageolet, tambourine, oboe, *borassa*, and bagpipe, allowed but little rest to toes and

heels, had given harmonious prognostics of another, when a confused murmur rose from the crowd, which in that place was almost exclusively of visitors from the little town of Canillo in Andorra. Significant looks were exchanged, and the couples who had been about to take their places retired with some precipitation from the circle—all except one young man and his partner, who, by the withdrawal of their companions, were left in significant and painful isolation. By his vest of blue velvet, his red silk sash, and the fine cotton stockings appearing over his hempen *spartillas*, it was not difficult to recognise in the cavalier an Andorran of the upper class; it was, in fact, Guyonemé Sagrita, and the girl was Juana. For a moment, they remained motionless and undecided, but rapidly collecting himself, for the demonstration regarding them had been too little equivocal to be mistaken, Sagrita bowed to his trembling and agitated partner, and, taking her hand, led her back to the old woman who acted as her duenna, but who was, in fact, her servant; for Juana was an orphan, and had really no nearer relative than Sagrita himself, who, as has been said, was her cousin. 'Nurse! nurse!' (so Juana was wont to call the worthy woman), 'your arm, quick, and let us go home.'

At this moment, Carlos came up, and seemed to gather at a glance how matters stood.

'You here, too!' exclaimed Sagrita, as soon as he saw the other.

Carlos did not reply; he only folded his arms, and covered the other with a cold stern look. But so stern was it, that, after a vain effort to stand his ground, the Andorran quailed, and muttering some inarticulate words, turned and moved off, the little crowd which had now gathered making way for him, as if they shrunk from his touch by an instinctive feeling of abhorrence. Stopping for a moment at a booth, he called for a measure of wine, gulped it down at a single draught, and then, throwing the dealer a *peseta* for payment, took his way with long strides towards his native valley.

Meanwhile, the nurse with great volubility was pouring forth explanations and excuses, partly to Carlos, partly to the bystanders.

'What could we do?' she cried in great excitement. 'What could I do? What could Juana do? I was afraid of that horrid man; so was Juana. So, when he asked her to dance, what could we do? He is her cousin, after all. It was only for a dance—one dance—one single dance. Oh, Carlos! speak! Speak, Carlos! Say, am I to blame? Is Juana to blame?'

'Not much, perhaps—you nurse, I mean; and Juana knows I do not blame her,' said Carlos. 'But enough of this. Come with me. Here are too many friends. Good people, let us pass, I pray.'

'Oh, if Carlos is satisfied'—'Carlos is the best judge'—'Carlos is doubtless right'—said various voices, as the multerer and the two women retired. And the music striking up again, another dance was formed, and for the moment the incident was forgotten.

But what had caused the temporary interruption of the Puigcerda festivities, and whence arose the feeling so unequivocally manifested towards Sagrita?

Guyonemé Sagrita, an only child, had inherited, in his twenty-second year, a large fortune for an Andorran. Naturally enough, he began to look about for a wife, and, as was perhaps also natural, his choice fell on Juana, his cousin by the mother's side. Little dreaming of a refusal, he soon asked her in marriage of her family. But he was sadly disappointed; for the parents of the girl—without assigning their real reasons, which arose from well-grounded distrust of his character—declined the offer, giving as their excuse her extreme youth. She was then, in fact, but fourteen years of age. Deeply mortified by this refusal—for he saw through the pretence put forward—he immediately offered his hand to one of her companions, a girl in comparatively poor

circumstances, thinking to revenge himself by provoking the envy of his relatives, which, in his self-conceit, for his vanity was unbounded, he doubted not would certainly be raised when they should see the humble girl become the sharer of his wealth. He was accepted in this instance; and retiring with his bride to his property, he forswore, as he thought for ever, the scene of what he considered his humiliation. Two years passed on, anything but happily, for his repulse by Juana's parents still rankled at his heart; and as for his poor wife, a gentle and inoffensive creature, she had to bear the consequences, and suffered much. About the end of that time, some business relating to his cattle obliged him to revisit Puigcerda. There, to his surprise, for he had shunned all communication with her or her family, he found that Juana was still unmarried. On making inquiries, he learned that this was neither from lack of opportunity, as she had received several excellent offers, nor from her being controlled by her father or mother, both of whom had died. He immediately took it into his head—so extreme was his self-complacency—that she had in reality loved him all along, and had resolved, since he had placed himself beyond her reach, to live and die a maid for his dear sake. He was, of course, highly elated at the supposed discovery; and, in the exultation of his imagined triumph, he openly cursed his precipitation in having, by his own inconsiderate and hasty marriage, placed between his cousin and himself the only bar, as he now declared, which existed to their union, and he took care that this confession of his repentance and regret should reach the girl's ears. It was after such avowals that he returned home to Canillo in Andorra; but thence, after passing a few days with his unhappy wife, during which time he shewed himself more discontented and savage than ever, he again descended into Spain, alleging urgent business, and taking the road to Urgel. Two days after, he returned. The next night his wife was taken suddenly ill; and on the morrow, after some hours of great suffering, she died. The corpse was, by his orders, buried the same day, and the funeral ceremony was scarcely over when he again set out from Canillo.

The sudden death of Sagrita's wife deeply impressed the people of the village and its neighbourhood, and she was much regretted by them; for her mild and unassuming disposition had won the heart of all who knew, and, what was the same thing, of all who pitied her. Still, no one suspected or dreamed that a crime had been committed. These simple and innocent people scarcely knew what crime was, for even the most trifling offences are rare in that secluded pastoral and thinly peopled valley.

But when, on their visit to Puigcerda, on the occasion of its festival, which fell only two days after—not all their sorrow for Sagrita's wife, real and unaffected as it was, could keep them away from their annual gathering—they heard of the unguarded declarations and hints that had fallen from their little-loved countryman, suspicion began to arise in the mind of every one, which became stronger and stronger as they gradually confided it to each other, and found that the same dark misgivings had occurred to all. And when that suspicion was confirmed by the appearance of Sagrita, and his leading Juana out to dance—the poor girl, it is but right here to remark, was as yet wholly ignorant not only of the circumstances but of the fact of his wife's death—no doubt any longer existed for them; and thus it was that they recoiled with natural horror from one whom they all now believed to be a murderer.

A very few words more will bring up our retrospect to the point at which we commenced our tale. The Andorrans, on their return from Puigcerda, at once communicated their suspicions to the civil authorities of their valley—namely, the syndic and the two viguiera. These officers immediately instituted an

inquiry, which soon left little doubt of Sagrita's guilt. It was ascertained that the journey he had undertaken just before his wife's death had been to Urgel, and that in that town he had bought a quantity of arsenic from a gipsy-farrier. The body of his wife was exhumed, and a large quantity of arsenic was detected in the remains, through the usual processes, by a French physician who was established at Urgel. A prosecution, conducted after the primitive manner of the valley, was instituted, and the wretched man, who seemed completely prostrated and incapable of making any defence, was found guilty, and condemned to death. On this followed the applications to the respective executioners of the Ariège and the Pyrénées Orientales, which applications, as we have seen, were baffled the one after the other by the intervention of Carlos. His motives for that intervention we have already seen explained to Levi of Perpignan: Sagrita was the cousin of Juana. It only remains to be added, that the girl was actually betrothed to Carlos, though the fact was unknown to her cousin, and that their marriage had been postponed only because of the death of her parents, the one of whom had followed the other to the grave after an interval of but a few months.

We left Carlos on his way to Andorra. But before entering the valley with him, we must say a few words about a district so seldom visited, except by the few inhabitants of the immediately adjacent country, and so little known even by name to the world at large.

Three mountain-glens, the wildest, perhaps, and the most picturesque of the Pyrenees, the basin formed by the union of these glens, together with the widening opening of that basin, which stretches and expands towards Spain, form this little territory, the dimensions of which may be, from north to south, six-and-thirty miles, from east to west, thirty. It contains six communes or parishes, amongst which are those of old Andorra, the chief town, and Canillo, mentioned above; and the population, of about 8000, is distributed amongst above thirty villages or hamlets. It is enclosed on all sides by the Pyrenean spurs, the waters of which are carried off by the Valira, a tributary of the Segre, which, in its turn, flows, at Mequinenza, into the Ebro. Down this water-way is floated much of the wood with which Andorra is covered. Its woods, indeed, constitute a very important part of its resources, much charcoal being consumed at home in its forges, which, as iron is plentiful, are numerous: it is even said that the name of Andorra is derived from the Arabic *darra*, 'a place thick with trees.' The valley of the Valira produces excellent crops of grain; but their flocks and herds form the chief wealth of the inhabitants, and it is from the pastoral life they lead, added to the natural seclusion of the whole locality, that the primitive character of the ancient republic is preserved; for, curious to say, an ancient republic it is—its origin as a separate, if not altogether independent state, dating from the time of Charlemagne, more than a thousand years ago. That monarch, in return for the assistance he received from the Andorrans of the time, when he defeated the Moors in the neighbouring valley—called that of Carol to this day—having conferred on them the privileges which their descendants still enjoy. Their independence, indeed, is not altogether absolute, for in spiritual matters they are subject to the Spanish bishop of Urgel, and in temporal, their two magistrates—called, from time immemorial, their viguiera—are appointed the one by that prelate, the other by the French government; while they also pay to the latter a yearly tribute of some L.40.

Tempting as is the present opportunity to enlarge upon the condition of this interesting little commonwealth, we must not allow ourselves to be drawn further from our proper tale than is necessary to elucidate it; we, therefore, must content ourselves by assuring the lover of scenery at once grand and

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beautiful—the sportsman, whether it be with rod or gun—the naturalist, let his preferred department be zoology, botany, or mineralogy—and the student of men and manners who would find something very original and simple—that in the Valley of Andorra they will each and all find abundant opportunity to gratify their respective tastes. And for further information on what seems to us rather an interesting subject, we may refer the reader—as, perhaps, he will have anticipated—to Mr Murray's Handbooks for France and Spain, though in this case both are rather meagre as to details; and to *A Summer in the Pyrenees*, by the late Honourable James Erskine Murray, the only traveller, so far as we know, who has published anything like a satisfactory and full account of Andorra from personal observation.

### HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

VISITING the splendid halls of the British Museum, I have often stood before the colossal statues and reliefs of those very Egyptian Pharaohs and Assyrian kings familiar to me from my earliest youth by the history of Joseph and Moses, and Hezekiah and Isaiah; and often have I admired the fragments of Persepolis, the reliefs of Lycia, and the frieze of the Parthenon, which carried me back, not only to the age of Darius and Harpagus and Pericles, but likewise to the happy time when I was first introduced to those august personages at school. At such moments, I could not but envy the bold and fortunate discoverers, Belzoni, Sir Charles Fellows, Botta, and Layard. I imagined the excitement they must have felt when disinterring the monuments of past greatness. Whoever has had the good-fortune of being present at Pompeii at the discovery of a Roman house, and beheld on the walls for the first time, after a lapse of eighteen centuries, those paintings, the last proprietor of which was a contemporary of Christ and the apostles, must certainly number those moments amongst the most interesting epochs of his life. Still, there are but few to whom such a pleasure is allotted, and I do not belong to them. But when I see that a visit to the Etruscan Necropolis, or a saunter through the streets of Pompeii, is impossible for me, I comfort myself with the thought that, after all, I could scarcely make a discovery either in Italy, or Egypt, or Assyria. Wherever I might go, other parties have preceded me; the scholars have published everything worth publishing, and the Cockneys have had the satisfaction of associating the illustrious names of Smith, Taylor, and Evans, with those of King Cheops, Pericles, and Phidias, by scratching them into the granite of the Pyramids and the marble of the Parthenon.

Accustomed to visit sometimes the British Museum, I have often been agreeably surprised by some new additions to the treasures exhibited in the upper rooms, such as were not, to my knowledge, lately acquired by the trustees. One morning, for instance, I found there the celebrated ivory tablet of Count Taverna, representing the body of Christ, raised by two angels, which Count Cicognara, in his *Storia della Scultura*, pronounced to be the finest ivory sculpture of the sixteenth century. Again, some most interesting Byzantine and mediæval enamels made their appearance; next, a splendid set of antique glass-cameos were exhibited, which I immediately recognised as the collection of the late Mr Townley, mentioned by the excellent Josiah Wedgwood, 'potter to Her Majesty,' in his description of the Portland Vase; and I felt the truth of the learned potter's remark, that 'those glasses will shew to the astonishment of the intelligent artist what perfection this beautiful and valuable art (of glass-making) had attained by

the ancients, and to what amazing extent it might be carried in this enlightened age of invention, genius, and taste, if it was emancipated from the restraints which a mistaken policy has imposed upon it.\* Enjoying these splendid remains of antiquity, especially the beautiful procession of Bacchus and Ariadne, one of the most charming compositions of antiquity, I wished that only Mr Apsley Pellatt were standing by, now that the taxes on glass have been abolished, to take a hint from the Townley pastes as to how much there remains to be achieved until our tumblers and decanters become works of art, instead of works of mere industry.

But the sudden appearance of those precious glass antiques was to me of still higher importance, as it confirmed my suspicion that there are hidden treasures in the Museum, unknown perhaps even to the trustees. I could not forget that the Townley pastes were bought by act of parliament in 1814; and that in the eyes of the Museum authorities they became ripe for exhibition only after having been buried in some dark recess forty years, watched by some antediluvian dragon, lest their beauty might refine the taste of the multitude, or inspire some poor artisan with the ambition of emulating the wonders of republican Greece and imperial Rome. All my endeavours were henceforth directed to the discovery of the spot where the treasures of the Museum lay hidden. Once I succeeded in getting into the subterranean vaults, where, to my great astonishment, I discovered the workshop of the restorer of the Assyrian reliefs, who joined some Ninevite fragments slowly to one another until they took the shape of a battle-scene; and convinced myself that, at the rate the work proceeded, the interesting reliefs may be exhibited about the time when Signor Panizzi brings his catalogue of the library to the letter Z. In the next vault, I found a number of Etruscan stone-coffins, adorned with rude but mythologically interesting reliefs, and was informed that the cellar was destined to be transformed into an elegant Etruscan museum. Proceeding with my subterranean inquiries, I stumbled upon a quantity of plaster-casts, which probably never will be exhibited here, since the collection of the Crystal Palace is far superior to them in arrangement and completeness; and I could not repress the thought that, distributed among the art-schools of England, they might be of greater use than thus packed up in the cellars of the Museum.

Disappointed in my subterranean rambles, and convinced that no discoveries of any moment can be made underground, I directed my attention to the upper story. A mysterious door at the end of the large hall which is half filled with British, northern, and mediæval monuments, peculiarly attracted my notice. From time to time, I saw parties of ladies and gentlemen ringing the bell and entering, and remaining inside for a considerable time: I concluded, therefore, that there must be something to be seen. Resolved to fathom the mystery, I likewise rung the bell, which was opened by a doorkeeper, who demanded to know what I wanted. In my confusion, I muttered the name of one of the Museum officials, and was immediately led to him. He received me with the greatest politeness, and without hesitation shewed me into the *sanctissimum*. In the centre of a square room of middling size, and lit by sky-light, I saw the celebrated Portland Vase. This master-piece of antique glass-manufacture, it will be recollected, was shivered to pieces by a fanatical English iconoclast, but restored with admirable skill by Mr Doubleday. It is now removed from the public gaze, and admired only by those whose social or literary position gives them the

\* Description of the Portland Vase, &c., by Josiah Wedgwood, F.R.S. and A.S., Potter to Her Majesty, and the Dukes of York and Clarence. London: 1790. (Page 38.)

privilege of being admitted to the 'Gold Room,' so called because the glass-cases along the walls contain antique gold ornaments. I admired the light and elegant Etruscan bracelets and wreaths found in the necropolis of Tuscany, and the ornaments of Magna Græcia, nobler in design, and of lighter art. Among them I perceived the archaic gold *patera* of Agrigentum, adorned with sacrificial animals, and the silver mirror-case of Tarentum, with the graceful representation of Venus at her toilet. The heavy Roman rings and trinkets, more valuable for the weight of gold than for artistic merit, answer entirely to the estimation the lords of the ancient world had for solid wealth; for, according to Petronius,\* 'a lump of gold is more beautiful than anything Phidias and Apelles—poor crazy Greeks—have produced.' Messrs Brown, Jones, and Robinson are quite of the same opinion, though not at all acquainted with Petronius and his *Satyricon*. The Celtic rings, necklaces, and fragments of armour, all of solid gold, exhibited here in two glass-cases, are not less interesting, since they belong to a time when Ireland was the richer and more cultivated of the sister-islands.

Along the eastern wall, the cases seemed, to be in some disorder: Greek and Roman terra-cotta fragments were here exhibited, scarcely worthy of being company with some Ninevite ivories of the highest interest, sent by Mr Loftus from Assyria. The hounds of Sennacherib, from his palace at Nineveh, though only of baked clay, could not fail to attract my attention; nor the terra-cotta tablet from Babylon, presented by Prince Albert, which represents a sportsman and his dogs—a rare specimen of Babylonian art, as it was patronised at the court of King Nebuchadnezzar.

Highly satisfied with the view of these valuable relics, I turned towards the door, when, in another dark corner of the glass-case, I beheld several smaller cases filled with engraved gems. Looking closer, I saw their cases covered with dust, a certain token that they had not been disturbed for many years; and to my great satisfaction, I found it impossible to make out the representations on the gems through the double glass behind which they were placed. What was impossible for me, was of course impossible for others; and thus I had at length reached the goal for which I had yearned so long and so earnestly: there they lay before me, those treasures, the exclusive sight of which was to be the pride of my future years! Without much hesitation, I asked the polite gentleman who had shewn me into the Gold Room permission to examine the rings in question. It was evidently an unusual, and perhaps an impertinent desire. But the gentleman, though somewhat embarrassed, complied, for he was young, and not yet swaddled and mummified in red tape. He opened the case, brought the gems into the Medal Room, and shewing me the rings one by one, seemed to be as much astonished at their beauty, and as unacquainted with them, as I was myself.

Such engraved gems are lasting monuments of the diffusion of taste and the high perfection of art among the ancients. As they are nearly indestructible, their number is really astonishing. Whilst Count Clarac, the accomplished French archaeologist, was not able to trace more than about 3000 antique statues in Europe—of course not including the statuettes under two feet high—there are about 50,000 antique engraved gems in the different public museums and collections of private amateurs. Indeed, there is scarcely anything more lovely than a series of sparkling gems ennobled by the stamp of genius. Accordingly, from the earliest times of antiquity, collections of gems were highly prized. Mithridates, the most celebrated king

of those countries which are now the theatre of war, whose residence was Sinope, and the Crimea the scene of his death, formed a most important collection of engraved precious stones, which, after his defeat, were exhibited at the triumph of Pompeius at Rome, and dedicated by the great conqueror to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Julius Caesar was, likewise, a connoisseur and collector of gems. He dedicated his collection to the temple of his ancestral patroness, the victorious Venus; for at that time the temples were a kind of museum, and, according to the old custom of Rome and Greece, every work of genius, every important statue, every beautiful picture, was regarded as the common property of all the citizens, as the common glory of the country, not to be hidden in private palaces, but to be displayed before the whole people; therefore all the great monuments of art, the works of Phidias, Praxiteles, Lysippus, or Apelles, and Polygnatus, were exhibited in temples or under porticoes in the market-places—the inscription mentioning the donor's name being the only reward of those who had bought them for the public.

At the time of the invasion of the barbarians, the statues of gold, silver, and brass were broken and melted down; in Christian times, the marble statues were often thrown into the lime-kiln, and converted into cement; but the engraved gems could neither be melted nor turned to any utilitarian purpose. Some of the larger stones were broken by fanaticism; but the great bulk of the smaller ones escaped destruction: they never disappeared entirely from sight; and thus, at the time of the revival of arts and science, eminent men were soon attracted by their beauty. Petrararch collected them; and Lorenzo de Medici, who succeeded in making the acquisition of about thirty master-pieces of glyptic art, had them marked with his initials. After his death, his treasures were dispersed during the Pazzi riots at Florence; most of his gems came into the possession of the Farnese family, and are now exhibited in the palace of the 'Studi' at Naples. It was with pleasure we met with the name of the great medieval patron of art and science on one of the cameos of the British Museum, representing a marching lion cut out of the pink layer of a cornelian onyx. This beautiful cameo is as yet unedited; no author on gems has ever mentioned it among the treasures of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

The delight derived from the contemplation of gems, which served in ancient times as the vehicle for copies of the most celebrated master-works of art, and for multiplying them by impressions, was so universally shared during the last three centuries, that numerous collections were formed, first in Italy, then in all the transalpine countries. Peyre, the philologist; Lauthier, the apothecary; Rascas de Bagarris; King Henry IV. of France; Louis XIV.; Philippe, Duke of Orleans (the Regent); Mr Crozat, the merchant-prince; Empress Josephine; Madame de Staël; and the Duc de Biacas, minister of Charles X., were the most celebrated collectors of gems in France. Among the English, the Earl of Arundel is mentioned as the first who possessed an important collection of these miniature antiquities, which are said by Goethe to contain the deepest meaning in the narrowest space. Henry, Prince of Wales, purchased the gems that belonged to Abraham Gorlaeus, a Dutch connoisseur; King George III. acquired the 'Dactylothea Smithiana'—that is to say, one hundred gems belonging to Mr John Smith, English consul at Venice, edited with typographical splendour, but, unhappily, nearly all of them modern copies. The Duke of Devonshire paid enormous sums for master-pieces of glyptic art: the fragment of a cow in amethyst, by the Greek artist Apollonides, cost him 1000 guineas; the celebrated figure of Diomedes, by Dioscorides, set in a ring, something more. The collection of the Duke of Marlborough became

\* *Satyricon*, ch. lxxxviii.

celebrated, not only from its own merit, but likewise from the skill of Cipriani and Bartolozzi, who drew and engraved it: a complete copy of the work fetching even now about £200 under the hammer. Not less beautiful were the collections of the Earl of Carlisle and Lord Beverly, of which some casts are preserved in the British Museum; for towards the close of the last century, a collection of gems was the indispensable appendage of every great house claiming the honour of patronising art. Mr Thomas Jenkins, at that time a celebrated English banker and dealer in antiquities at Rome, when driven by the French from his house in 1790, thought his collection of cameos and intaglios so valuable, that he concealed them immediately about his person. He died at Yarmouth, on landing after a storm at sea, having received considerable hurt from his treasures hidden on his body.

The gems of the British Museum belonged partly to the Townley Collection; some very select ones were presented by Mr Cracherode; but the most beautiful of them come from the bequest of Mr Payne Knight. Though few in number, they are still equal in importance to any collection in Europe. There is, for instance, the portrait of Julius Cæsar in front, cut into the most limpid cornelian, the work of Dioscorides, the artist who, according to Pliny and Suetonius, cut the portrait of Augustus for the imperial seal. The stone belonged for many centuries to the treasures of the cathedral of Eigeac in France, and was presented to the minister Colbert by the chapter of the church. It is a masterpiece of art, and probably the most beautiful of all the portraits of the dictator. There is, again, a most lovely group—Psyche caught in a trap among flowers, deeply repenting her imprudence, while Cupid comes compassionately to her rescue. The execution of this group is as beautiful as the conception is charming. It is the work of the Greek artist Pamphilus. On another gem, we see Cupid drawing a crocodile from the water by means of a peculiar kind of hook, which illustrates the prophecy of Ezekiel, chap. xxix.—where Pharaoh is called the great crocodile that lies in the midst of his rivers; but God will put hooks into his jaws, and bring him up out of the midst of his rivers, &c.

If space permitted, I could describe many more of these beautiful gems; but there is one fragment of a cameo which I cannot leave unmentioned, since it was one of the principal reasons why the passion for engraved gems has altogether died out in England. It is the work of Pistrucci, the Italian artist, who became celebrated for introducing good taste into the English mint, by sinking the die with the portrait of George IV., with St George and the dragon on the reverse, for the gold coins. The head of Flora, cut by Pistrucci, is worthy of his renown; it is uncommonly pretty, and though thoroughly modern in conception, still so much superior to the works of the generality of modern engravers, that Payne Knight took it for antique. When it was ascertained, however, that even a connoisseur of Payne Knight's reputation might be taken in, a panic seized the collectors, and nobody trusted his own judgment—the less so, that the modern engravers boasted they had reached the perfection of antique art. Prince Poniatowski, at Florence, who about the same time amused himself by having scenes from Virgil and Homer cut in gems, passing them off for antique, disgusted people still more with collecting, since he encouraged forgery by buying gems to which the names of antique artists had been recently added. Thus, engraved stones, intaglios, and cameos went out of fashion, and even the splendid collection in the British Museum was almost forgotten; and the rather that it is necessary to place the rings against the light in order to enjoy their beauty. Unless, therefore, some contrivance can be found analogous to the way in which the gems are placed at Naples against the windows, in order to shew their transparent brilliancy

and delicate engraving, the contemplation of these treasures must remain the privilege of a few discoverers who, like me, find the key to the hidden treasures.

## POEMS BY ISA.\*

We rarely notice poetry; and the reason is, that it would be difficult to know where to begin, and still more so to imagine where the labour would end. The minor poetry of the day is quite oppressive by its quantity, and not the less so that it is highly respectable in its quality. From the inside of the pretty volumes, however, that deck our table every week, an agreeable conclusion, we are happy to say, is inevitable—that the national mind is growing more and more refined and elegant; and from the outside, another scarcely less pleasing, that poverty is ceasing to be the badge of the poetical tribe.

But there is one volume we cannot allow to glide away with the rest, since it contains not merely genuine poetry of the universal class—poetry of the affections—but is interesting from its being the production of leisure hours—hours stolen from sleep after a day spent by its young and simple-minded authoress in the dreary, monotonous, and ill-requited labours of a sempstress. But we are perhaps wrong in saying that hours so spent are stolen from sleep; for in such moments the senses are in a profound slumber, and the mind alone is wakeful, expatiating in dreams that differ from those of sleep only in their method and coherency.

Isa was first discovered (like a wild violet) by the worthy proprietor of the *Scotsman*, and, notwithstanding her mechanical occupation, is received and cherished by families in a more prosperous condition. Being a gentle, modest, simple, genuine Scottish lassie, we will allow her to speak to the hearts of our readers in her native Doric:

## THE AE LAMB O' THE FAULD.

In yon rude lanely sheilin',  
Near nae ither house nor hauld,  
There dwelt a hillside shepherd,  
Wi' the ae lamb o' his fauld.  
A gray-haired rugged carle was he,  
Wi' broo' fu' stern an' bauld,  
Wha said his sweet wee Janet  
Was the ae lamb o' his fauld.

Oh! blithe an' bonny was the bairn,  
A gleesome thing was she,  
As wi' her flock she strayed amang  
The hills where rises Dee.  
Her weel-loe'd mother dee'd when she  
Was scarce six simmers auld,  
An' left the shepherd lanely  
Wi' the ae lamb o' the fauld.

He took her in the simmer where  
A bothy he had made,  
Whene'er she tired he carried her,  
An' wrapped her in his plaid;  
An' he sang wild Border ballads,  
An' fairy tales he tauld,  
While restin' on the hillside  
Wi' the ae lamb o' his fauld.

In winter she would trim the fire  
When daylight wore awa',  
An' in the window set the lamp  
To guide him through the snaw;  
Then, laid aside his drippin' plaid,  
Her arms wad him enfauld,  
When he cam back weat an' weary  
To the ae lamb o' his fauld.

\* Poems by Isa. William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1856.

The mountain blasts are bleak an' chill,  
An' she grew thin an' weak;  
There cam a wild licht to her e'e,  
A strange red to her cheek;  
And oh! sae fast she faded, till  
Ae winter mornin' cauld,  
Dead, on her father's bosom,  
Lay the ae lamb o' the fauld.

He stood uncovered in the drift,  
An' saw the wee grave made,  
Nane daured to comfort, when away  
He tearless turned, an' said:  
'There's nae licht in the sheelin' noo;  
My hearth will aye be cauld;  
I've nocht on earth to care for  
Sin' my ae lamb's i' THE FAULD.'

The above we take to be a master-piece of its kind, and we are sure our opinion will be endorsed by every reader who has a heart in his bosom. The next specimen is in English, and exhibits Isa in her moralising mood:

#### GOING OUT AND COMING IN.

In that home was joy and sorrow  
Where an infant first drew breath,  
While an aged sire was drawing  
Near unto the gate of death.  
His feeble pulse was failing,  
And his eye was growing dim;  
He was standing on the threshold  
When they brought the babe to him.

While to murmur forth a blessing  
On the little one he tried,  
In his trembling arms he raised it,  
Pressed it to his lips, and died.  
An awful darkness resteth  
On the path they both begin,  
Who thus met upon the threshold,  
Going out and coming in.

Going out unto the triumph,  
Coming in unto the fight—  
Coming in unto the darkness,  
Going out unto the light,  
Although the shadow deepened  
In the moment of eclipse,  
When he passed through the dread portal,  
With the blessing on his lips.

And to him who bravely conquers  
As he conquered in the strife,  
Life is but the way of dying—  
Death is but the gate of life;  
Yet awful darkness resteth  
On the path we all begin,  
Where we meet upon the threshold,  
Going out and coming in.

We conclude with the following exquisite picture, for Isa, even in her didactic vein, is essentially picturesque:

#### THE BLIND BAIEN.

The wee blind beggar bairnie sits  
Close to that woman's feet,  
An' there he nestles frae the cauld,  
An' shelters frae the heat.  
I ken nae if he be her ain,  
But kindly does she speak,  
For blessed God makes woman love  
The helpless an' the weak.

I'm wae to see his wistfu' face,  
As weary day by day  
He covers sae still an' silent there,  
Whileither bairnies play.

The sigh that lifts his breastie comes,  
Like sad winds frae the sea,  
Wi' sic a dreary sough, as wad  
Bring tears into yer e'e.

I'm wae to see his high braid broo,  
Sae thoctfu' an' sae wan;  
His look o' care, that were mair fit  
For a warid-weary man.  
Oh! the dark emptiness within,  
Thochts that no rest can know,  
An' shapeless forms that vex him,  
Wi' their hurrying to an' fro.

An' now she lifts him in her arms,  
His wakin' nicht is past,  
An' round his sma' and wasted form  
Her tattered shawl is cast.  
His face is buried in her neck,  
An' close to her he clings,  
For faith an' love hae filled his heart,  
An' they are blessed things.

She bears him through the bustlin' crowd,  
But noo he fears nae harm,  
He'll sleep within her bosom too—  
To him it's saft and warm.  
Oh, her ain weary heart wad close  
In wretchedness an' sin,  
But he keeps in 't an open door,  
For God to enter in.

#### THE SWORD MIMUNG.

This sword was forged by Weland, in a trial of skill with another celebrated weapon-smith, Amilias by name. Weland first made a sword with which he cut a thread of wool lying on the water. But, not content with this, he reformed the blade, which then cut through the whole ball of floating wool. Still dissatisfied, he again passed it through the fire, and at length produced so keen a weapon that it divided a whole bundle of wool floating in water. Amilias, on his part, forged a suit of armour so much to his own satisfaction, that, sitting down on a stool, he bade Weland try his weapon upon him. Weland obeyed, and there being no apparent effect, asked Amilias if he felt any particular sensation. Amilias said he felt as though cold water had passed through his bowels. Weland then bade him shake himself. On doing so, the effect of the blow was apparent: he fell dead in two pieces.—*Hewitt's Ancient Armour.*

#### CATO.

If Cicero had too little character, Cato had too much. . . . Public virtue is like gold, if it is to be current, it must be alloyed. Cato left the alloy out, and cared little whether his coin circulated or not; all he knew was, that its purity must never be tampered with, and that whoever would not receive it as he tendered it must be corrupt or criminal. He was a good orator, but his oratory was in vain; he was always ready with advice, but it was advice incapable of being put in practice; he was esteemed by all, but with an esteem that bore no fruit. Inflexibly and almost savagely austere, he was one of those men whom posterity place in their Valhallas, but whom nations, unless for example's sake, deny admittance to their councils—the most irreproachable of virtuous men, but the most useless.—*Lamartine's History of Caesar.*

#### EQUIVALENT HONOURS.

If it is a happiness to be nobly descended, it is no less to have so much merit that nobody inquires whether you are so or not.—*La Bruyere.*

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